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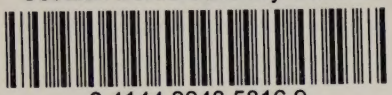

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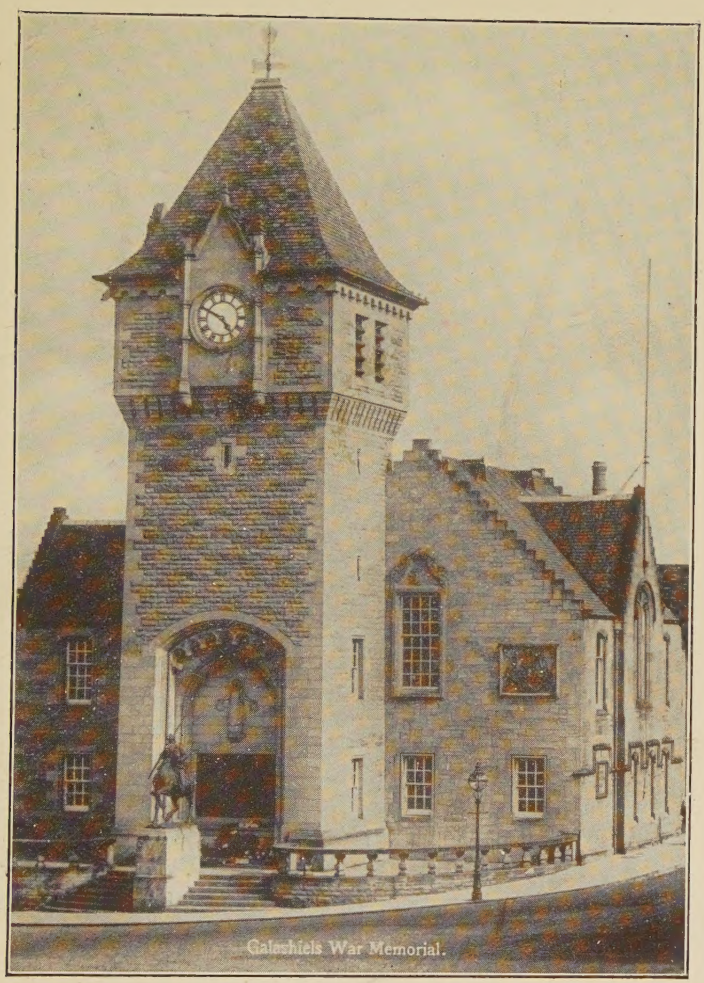


GALASHIELS WAR MEMORIAL.

The Architect was Sir Robert Lorimer, R.S.A. The Border Horseman is by Thos. J. Clapperton, Sculptor, a native of Galashiels, now settled in London.

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# GALASHIELS IN HISTORY

BY

EX-PROVOST WILLIAM RUTHERFORD

OF GALASHIELS

1930

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A Survivor from the Forest, from Torwoodlee.

# Galashiels in History

*"It is upon record, or else reported*
*Successively from age to age."*

IN a sketch such as this it will perhaps be more interesting to deal at somewhat greater length with the earlier and less generally known periods, and more briefly with comparatively modern times.

Galashiels was erected into a Burgh of Barony in 1599. Up to that time, and from time immemorial, it had been part of Gala Forest, which was part of the great forest that in old time occupied the whole of the central part of the South of Scotland. This great forest embraced the greater part of the valleys of the Tweed, the Clyde, and the Annan, and their tributaries. With the passage of the centuries this great forest was gradually reduced in size, and broken up into detached parts, till about the time of the erection of Galashiels into a Burgh it embraced only parts of the valleys of the Gala and the Tweed, and the whole of the valleys of the Yarrow and the Ettrick, and, as the valley of the Ettrick was by that time much the largest part, the forest came to be very generally known as "Ettrick Forest," or simply as "The

Forest." Craig-Brown says there is proof that the Forest Stead of Galashiels, roughly very much the same area as the modern Parish of Galashiels, without the Lindean part, was from prehistoric times one of the most populous parts of The Forest, and that a sheiling or hamlet or village must have developed there at a very early date. The oldest known inhabitants of the district, who are generally called Britons, were Cymri, a branch of the Celtic race, being the same as the Britons of England and Wales, and a different branch of the Celtic race from the Gaelic-speaking Picts and Scots.

The great primeval forest first emerges from immemorial silence and appears in recorded history in the days of the Romans. The Romans having already overrun England, Agricola in the year 80 A.D. invaded the South of Scotland. It is now established that the route he followed was that which became the great Roman Road, still known as Watling Street, over the Cheviots to Trimontium or the Eildon Hills, where he built a camp or fort at Newstead. The Roman Army must often have been in full view from points now within the Burgh of Galashiels, such as the Barrs Road, and must have been unwelcome and formidable neighbours. The Roman Road followed the valley of the Leader, leaving on its left the strong strategic position of Gala Hill covering the valleys of the Gala and the Tweed.

This great primeval forest is described by the Roman writers as at that time vast and dense, with

huge trees, high steep hills, and swampy water-logged valleys, very difficult and dangerous to penetrate, and an almost impregnable refuge for the natives. These native Britons were not the race of absolutely uncivilised barbarians they are often represented to have been. They were skilful in working in iron and other metals, and were well armed. They were good horsemen, and used chariots. They knew how to weave. They tilled such small areas of land as were most easily tilled, and had large herds of cattle and swine, and had also flocks of sheep. As the centuries passed the flocks of sheep gradually increased. As the forest was cleared the pasturage improved, and this led later, in the days of the great abbeys, to a large export of wool from Berwick to Flanders, and in modern times to our woollen manufacturing industry.

The Romans tried again and again for 300 years, but without any permanent success, to subdue the South of Scotland, and never seem to have been able to hold the Forest. The Britons from the Forest again and again attacked the great Roman fort at Trimontium, and thrice at least it was completely overwhelmed and abandoned for long periods. In the Forest the Romans met with repeated disasters. In 116 A.D. the Ninth Legion, complete with the usual auxiliaries and camp followers, probably somewhere between 5000 and 10,000 men, a considerable army for those days in Britain, set out from its base at York along the great Roman Road for the North.

It would appear to have reached Trimontium, and then to have disappeared into the Forest. As in the ballad of The Outlaw Murray, more than 1000 years later,

> **" They saw the derk forest them before,**
> **And thought it awsome for to see."**

Not one man returned, nor is anything known of the fate which overwhelmed it, nor has any trace or relic of it been found from that day to this. The Ninth Legion entered the " derk " and " awsome " forest, and silence closed over and around it, and from that day there was no Ninth Legion in the Armies of Rome.

The Romans finally retired from Britain in 410 A.D., but a considerable time before that the Angles had obtained a lodgment on the east coast, and had commenced to penetrate up the valleys. When the Angles had penetrated as far up the Tweed as Galashiels they probably found there a shiel or hamlet on the Gala, near where the Old Town now is, and called it " Galashiels." " Gala " is a British or Cymric word, and " Shiels " is an Anglo-Saxon word for a hamlet. They were gradually getting into a more difficult part of the Forest, and about Galashiels they appear to have been held up. While this penetration was going forward, and just before the withdrawal of the Romans, St. Ninian (or Ringan), a Christianised Briton from south of the Solway, landed at Candida Casa, now Whithorn, in Galloway, and succeeded, at least nominally, in converting the Britons to

Christianity. This was 150 years before St. Columba landed on Iona, and it was not for another 100 years that St. Aidan from Iona, followed by St. Cuthbert from Old Melrose, converted the Angles to Christianity. During this period the difference of religion added to the bitterness of the struggle between the Britons and the Angles, and it was during this period, and about 516 A.D., that the historic King Arthur, the great national hero of the Christianised Britons or Cymri, appeared in the South of Scotland. The historical King Arthur must be distinguished from the legendary King Arthur with his Knights of The Round Table into which he afterwards developed. The historical King Arthur fought twelve victorious battles, two of which were in the Wood of Caledon, Cat Coit Celidon, or the Forest, the seventh having been identified by Veitch as having been fought at Cademuir—which means "great battle"—near Peebles, and the eighth in the valley of the Gala between the Heriot and the Lugate. One result of these victories was that the frontier between the Britons and Angles was stabilised for about 200 years along the line of the Catrail. This remarkable work, for long shrouded in mystery, was probably a much stronger frontier defence than is generally supposed. It ran through a very difficult country, which was then densely wooded, and, as was usual with the earthworks of the Britons, was probably surmounted by a powerful wooden palisade, and was somewhat comparable with the great Roman wall itself, at least

before the latter was rebuilt in stone. The northern end of the Catrail is at Torwoodlee, and from there it runs south through part of the Forest, that is now within the Burgh of Galashiels, to Leebrae, and on to Mossilee, and from there to Rink Camp, all in the Parish of Galashiels, and from there across the valleys of the Tweed, Yarrow and Ettrick, all in the Forest, over Alemoor by Teviot Head to Peel Fell in the Cheviots.

The historical King Arthur's connection with the South of Scotland, and with the Forest, will not be found in the older standard histories of Scotland, even down to Hill Burton's. Great progress has, however, recently been made in investigations into Celtic history, and this connection of the historical King Arthur with the South of Scotland will be found in Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, published in 1876-80, and in Veitch's *History and Poetry of the Scottish Border*, published in 1893, which are recognised as two of the most valuable recent contributions to the early history of Scotland. Their views are confirmed by a still more recent work, Scott's *Pictish Nation: its People and its Church*, published in 1917. The historical King Arthur was killed at Camelon, on the Carron, in Stirlingshire, in 537 A.D. After his death his fame soon passed into legend, and he became the Christian hero king of the poems and romances from the days of the old Cymric bards, some of the chief of whom themselves came from the South of Scotland, right down through the mediæval literature of Britain and

Europe to our own day, when Tennyson wrote his *Idylls of the King*. King Arthur and his Knights of The Table Round have been perhaps the greatest theme of romance and poetry in all literature. According to one form of the legends King Arthur still lives in " Eildon's caverns vast," and will come again at his country's need.

In the 200 years following the historical King Arthur, when the frontier between the Britons, or Cymric, and the Angles was more or less stabilised on the line of the Catrail, the Angles were also nominally Christianised, and then they in their turn were overrun by the Danes, a kindred, but still pagan, people. The Danes are known to have penetrated at least as far up the Tweed as the Monastery of Old Melrose, which they burned in 839. Galashiels probably had to reckon with them. The Danes in their turn were Christianised. A process of absorption and assimilation then gradually set in, but it took some hundreds of years till the Anglo-Danes and the Britons ceased to be spoken of as two separate peoples —the latest known date being 1165—and became one people, the people of the South of Scotland.

Meantime other events had been happening which led to the consolidation of the people of the whole of Scotland into one nation. As the result of a marriage between the Ruling House of the Scots and the Ruling House of the Picts a Scottish prince had succeeded to both, and as the result of a later marriage between the Ruling House of the Scots and Picts and

the Ruling House of the Britons or Cymri a Scottish prince had again succeeded to both. As the King of Scots was now very powerful that part of Anglo-Danish Northumbria between the Tweed and the Forth was ceded to him. This cession was finally established by the Battle of Carham, near Kelso, in 1018, and the southern boundary of Scotland assumed practically its present line along the Tweed and Cheviots. This was further consolidated by another marriage, that between Malcolm Canmore and the Anglo-Saxon princess Margaret, known as St. Margaret, driven from England by William the Conqueror. Yet another marriage more than 400 years later, that of James IV. to Margaret Tudor, led to the Union of the Crowns and the foundation of the British Empire. Peaceful succession following royal marriages seems in those days to have proved more powerful for union than force of arms, as peaceful measures still do.

It it interesting, but perhaps idle, to speculate what are the proportions of British (Cymric) and Anglo-Danish blood in the people of the South of Scotland. Probably Anglo-Danish predominates, and probably there is a greater proportion of Angle and Danish blood in the east, and of British blood in the west, but what about a place like Galashiels that was actually on the Catrail, so long the dividing line between the races? And it is one of the curious dispensations of history that the Scots, who were the smallest of the peoples that went to make up the people of Scotland,

AULD MERCAT CROSS, GALASHIELS.

Probably first erected soon after 1599. The shaft is the original shaft, but the base is modern. The house in background was formerly the Cloth Hall.

have given their Rulers and their name to the whole country, and that the Anglo-Danes, who were the next smallest, have given their language.

The modern history of Scotland is generally regarded as beginning with the consolidation of the Kingdom under Malcolm Canmore. The Forest comes into this modern history as the personal property of the King. Very soon, as the result of grants by the Kings, especially David I., the " sair Saint for the Croun," it was greatly reduced in size, and it was gradually cleared, till later the large trees had to be carefully preserved. From the time of Bruce onwards no large trees were allowed to be felled without special warrant, and warrants were only granted for felling specified numbers of oaks or other trees required for repairing Abbeys or Castles burned by the enemy. Still, according to the ballad of The Outlaw Murray—

> " Ettricke Foreste is a feir foreste,
> In it grows manie a semelie tree ;
> There's hart and hynd, and dae and rae,
> And of a wilde beastes grete plentie."

and in Queen Mary's day 500 head of game could still be got at one hunting. But gradually sheep replaced the " wilde beastes."

To follow the history of Galashiels from the time of Malcolm Canmore to the time when it was made a burgh in 1599, say, 500 years later, one must follow the history of the Forest, of which Galashiels was a part, and one of the most populous and important parts. And it must always be borne in mind that the Forest was gradually changing, that it was being

gradually reduced in size, and cleared of timber, and drained, and converted into good grazing. The great Border Abbeys which arose, flourished, and decayed, within this period, powerfully influenced the change. It has taken the work of many generations of men to transform the country round Galashiels from the dense water-logged forest that the Romans knew to the country as we know it to-day.

From the commencement of the modern history of Scotland, the Forest, including Gala Forest and the Forest Stead of Galashiels, one of its most important parts, was the property of the Crown, and the Foresters, including under that term the whole inhabitants, hunters, men we would now call foresters, shepherds, and all others, were Crown vassals. The Forest continued to be the property of the Crown, and the Foresters continued to be the direct vassals of the King, except for a periof of 134 years, from 1321 to 1455, when the Forest was the property of the Douglas, and when the foresters were vassals of the Douglas. It was feued out to the old tacksmen of the Forest Steads, the predecessors of the present landowners, at various dates about the time when Galashiels was made a burgh. The feu of Galashiels was granted in 1566. During this long period, which included the protracted and desperate struggle for independence, one would expect that the Foresters, including the Gala Foresters, would be engaged wherever the Crown levies, or the Douglas levies, respectively, were engaged, and that is what history

records. In 1171 William the Lion, so named because he adopted " the ruddy lion ramped in gold " as the Royal Arms, collected an army at Caddonlea, and invaded England. The Gala Foresters would be there. In 1296 Wallace defeated the Earl of Dunbar near Dunbar, and followed him to Gorkhelm, or Gorgum, as the top of Gala Hill was till recently called, but did not attack the position. Blind Harry says—

> " Our few he had, the strenth was thik and strang,
> . . . . . .
> In till Gorkhelm, erll Patrik leiffit at rest."

It is recorded that Wallace's men were mainly from the Forest. In connection with this, Craig-Brown says—" The non-occurrence of ' Galashiels ' in any of the numerous Melrose charters relating to Gala Water, and this mention of ' Gorgum ' without reference to a neighbouring village, seem to justify the conclusion that the Shepherds' sheilings had not yet developed into a community with a distinctive name." But Craig-Brown seems to be overlooking the fact that Blind Harry wrote his *Wallace* about 1470-90, and that the name " Galuschel " appears in writings that are still extant under as early a date at 1337, so that Blind Harry not having mentioned Galashiels along with Gorgum is of no significance, for Galashiels was undoubtedly in existence long before Blind Harry's Day. The evidence for the name " Galashiels " in 1337 is contemporaneous, being from Fordun, who died about 1384. Again, there seems no reason to expect the name " Galashiels " to occur

in the Melrose Charters. It never belonged to Melrose Abbey, and the River Gala, not Galashiels, was the natural boundary to appear in Charters of the Abbey lands. Galashiels had probably come into existence long before the time of Wallace. The name "Selkirk" is of a similar derivation to the name "Galashiels." The one is the "shiels" at the church, and the other is the "shiels" on the Gala. Craig-Brown in another passage says—"Near some little village, occupied by the King's foresters, shepherds, and neat-herds, pious Culdees had planted a church, which took the name of 'Scheleschirche,' from the shiels or shielings under its wing; and further north a little clachan came to be known as 'Galaschel'—the shiel or shiels beside the Gala." There are many place-names in the South of Scotland derived from Danish, whereas "shiels" is Anglo-Saxon, and the probability would seem to be that both places had come into existence, and received names, some time after the Angles had penetrated so far up Tweed, and before they had been overrun by the Danes, and the latter part of this period was in the time of the Culdees.

In 1297 it is recorded that Wallace was in the Forest collecting an army, and with this army he gained the victory at Stirling Bridge. Wallace was acting in name of Baliol, then King, and in his name he would summon the Foresters as Crown vassals, and there would be a full levy of them in this army. In the following year he was defeated, being overwhelmed

by numbers at the Battle of Falkirk. At this battle Wallace's army was arranged in circular clumps or shiltrons of spearmen with archers in the centre, and the last of these shiltrons to be broken up was that of the spearmen and archers of the Forest, who according to Hemingford, an English chronicler, fell fighting round their leader. He records that these spearmen and archers from the Forest were men of fine build and more than usually tall, *elegantis formæ et procerae staturae*. This, in 1298, appears to be the first description of " The Braw, Braw Lads of Gala Water " as such. " Braw " is the Scotch equivalent of the English and French " brave," and its primary meaning is " courageous, outstanding in manly qualities," and its secondary meaning, " outstanding in other qualities, handsome and well equipped, well dressed." The longer ago the word was used it was probably used in a meaning nearer its primary meaning, but now it is generally used in its secondary meaning. The song " Braw, Braw Lads " is far older than Burns. It was certainly in existence before 1632, and was probably old then. How old, and what exactly the original significance of the words was, must be left to conjecture. Hemingford's description is, however, suggestive. His description applied to the men from all parts of the Forest, but the song as it has come down confines it to the Lads of Gala Water, and it has become a song of sentiment—a most beautiful one—but not a song of heroism. Ettrick and Yarrow were then also parts of the Forest, and

Burns is like Hemingford in this that he applies the description to the lads of the whole Forest—

> "Braw, braw lads on Yarrow braes
> Ye wander through the blooming heather;
> But Yarrow braes nor Ettrick shaws
> Can match the lads o' Gala Water."

In this connection it may be remembered that one version of that fine ballad, "The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow," makes the hero a Gala man—

> "When he got o'er yon high, high hill,
> An' down the dens o' Yarrow,
> There did he see the nine lords all,
> But there was not one his marrow."
>
> "Now here ye're nine, an' I'm but ane,
> But yet I am not sorrow;
> For here I'll fecht ye man for man,
> For my true love on Yarrow."

In 1299, 1300 and 1302 the Foresters are again in the records. In 1303 Symon Fraser, then Keeper of the Forest, with a small army raised in the Forest, defeated the English at the Battle of Roslin. In 1304 he and Wallace were in turn defeated at Haprew in the Forest, and Edward I. is recorded as having been in the Forest in person. 1306 Bruce killed Comyn, and was crowned King, and the Foresters, who then became the followers of Bruce, took their full share in clearing the English out of Scotland, till at the date of Bannockburn, 1314, Stirling Castle was all that remained in their hands. It is recorded that at the Battle of Bannockburn the English archers were routed by spearmen from the Forest. In 1321 Bruce

gave the Forest to the Good Lord James Douglas, and this gift he confirmed by a famous Charter, known as the Emerald Charter, because the Bruce as a special mark of honour put an Emerald Ring on the finger of the Douglas. The Foresters, including the Foresters of Gala Forest, then became the vassals and followers of the Douglas. Probably under the early Douglases the strong tower known as the " Hunter's Ha' " was erected. There charters were granted by the Douglas. It stood in the Old Town, near where the Old Town School now stands, till 1814, when it was cleared away in the interest of education. The Foresters, as followers of the Douglas, were at Halidon Hill (1333), when their leader, the son of the Good Lord James, was amongst the slain. In 1335 Edward III., who had overrun the South of Scotland, invaded the Forest, but could not get at the Scotch force, which retired " under the hospitable covert of the wilderness." The Forest is frequently described in charters as " waste," though it must have been a very different forest from what it was in the days of the Romans a thousand years earlier.

Two years afterwards, in 1337, occurred the fight out of which originated the Galashiels Burgh Coat of Arms and its motto " Sour Plums." The Borderers, under Sir William Douglas, the Flower of Chivalry, had again almost succeeded in clearing the English out of the South of Scotland, and a Scotch army was laying seige to Edinburgh Castle, one of the last places in the hands of the English, when

" The Marchers of England, hering of the sege of Edenburge, cam to rescue it; so that the (Scots) cam thens to Clerkington, and the Englischemenne cam to Krethtoun, where betwixt them and the Scottes was a great fighte, and many slyne on both parties. Then the Scottes made as they wold go yn to England, and loged themselves at Galuschel, and the Englische went over Twede."

A consistent tradition, " reported successively from age to age," has preserved from oblivion another fight that took place before the English went over Tweed, or at any rate before all of them went over. The Foresters of Galashiels made a sudden attack on them when they are said to have been eating the Sour Plums of the district, and utterly defeated them, the small syke having "run red for three days and three nights." The place is to this day known as the " Englishmen's Syke," and the Raid Stane marks the spot. However the affair befel there must have been something dramatically bold and complete about it to make it catch the imagination of the people, so that, of all the innumerable daring exploits of the time that have been forgotten, the memory of this one has been proudly handed down by tradition from generation to generation and preserved. It was celebrated in an old song, " Sour Plums in Galashiels," the words of which have unfortunately been lost, but the tune of which is still preserved. Thomas Scott, an uncle of Sir Walter Scott, died at the age of 90. He was a great musician on the Scotch pipes, and on his death-

ABBOTSFORD.

From Galashiels. The house has been extended towards the right since Sir Walter Scott's day. The River Tweed, not seen in the photograph, flows in front of the house. The woods behind the house were laid out by Sir Walter Scott. The Eildon Hills form the background.

bed made his son play over the tune of " Sour Plums in Galashiels " that he might make sure he had it right. On which Ruskin wrote, "Here's a thing to be well looked after before setting out for heaven, that the tune of ' Sour Plums in Galashiels ' may still be played on earth in an incorrupt manner."

In this sketch it is impossible to set out all the recorded events in which the Foresters were engaged, but two others may be mentioned. At the battle of Neville's Cross, near Durham, in 1346, five hundred of the Douglas followers fell. At Otterburn in 1388 Robert Hoppringle of Galashiels was the much-valued shield bearer—*dilectus meus scutifer*—to the dead Earl Douglas, who won that " well foughten field," and of a surety the men of Galashiels were with him.

" My nephew good," the Douglas said,
" What recks the death of ane !
Last night I dreamed a dreary dream,
And I ken the day's thy ain."

The moon was clear, the day drew near,
The spears in flinders flew,
But many a gallant Englishman
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.

Robert Hoppringle served the next two earls in the same capacity, and along with his leader at last fell fighting in France.

In 1455 the Douglas estates were forfeited and reverted to the Crown, and the Foresters, including the men of Galashiels, again became the direct vassals of the King. By this time Galashiels was a place of

considerable importance, being the place where the wooden equipment required for the artillery of that day was made. In 1469 the Forest was connected with a Royal Marriage of considerable importance to Scotland. In that year James III. married Margaret of Denmark. She brought with her as her dowry the islands of Orkney and Shetland, which completed Scotland, except for the later division of the Debateable Land, as it still stands to-day. The King gave her the Forest as a marriage settlement.

In 1503 there was another Royal Marriage with which the Forest had the same direct connection, and which future events made of much greater importance, the marriage of James IV. with Margaret Tudor of England. This marriage led one hundred years later to the Union of the Crowns by the succession of the great-grandson of that marriage to the English Throne, and paved the way for the establishment of the British Empire. The Forest was granted along with other lands to Margaret Tudor as her dowry. Sir John Murray of Philiphaugh, as Sheriff of the Forest, gave sasine or infeftment thereof to English Commissioners, Lord Dacre and Richard Erington, representing Margaret Tudor, by delivery of the usual symbols of earth and stone, " upon the soil of the said lordship, near the town and manor of Galashiels," among the witnesses being Walter Scot of Bukcleuch, David Hoppringill of Galashiels, and William Hoppringill of Torwoodlee. Dunbar, the Scottish poet-laureate, " The Rhymer of Scotland," celebrated

this marriage with a poem called "The Thistle and the Rose," and ever since the thistle and the rose have been regarded as its special emblems.

No one at the time of that marriage could have foreseen that it would lead to the Union of the Crowns, but though other marriages had not, it was hoped that it would at least bring peace between the two countries. But Flodden came within ten years, in 1513, and was followed by more than thirty years of the most savage and relentless warfare that even the Borders had ever seen. For Flodden the whole fighting strength of the Borders was levied, and amongst other places the whole fighting strength of the Forest, including Gala Forest. There is no record of those who fell at Flodden. The titles to land bear witness to some, and Burgh Records to others, but of the many there is no record, and none was to be expected. David Hoppringill, Younger, of Galashiels, is recorded to have been amongst the fallen, and according to tradition four of his sons fell with him, the tenancy of the forest steading of Galashiels passing to John, his youngest son. Where their leader and his four sons fought, and where they fell, the men of Galashiels also assuredly fought and fell. William Pringle of Torwoodlee and many other tenants of

Forest Steadings also fell. Of the rank and file there is no means of estimating the number, but all went, and very few returned. The fate of the Foresters was probably the same as the heroic fate their forefathers met fighting for Wallace, more than 200 years before, at Falkirk. Flodden was in many respects a very similar battle.

"The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King."

Very few of the Foresters returned from that Homeric struggle.

"The flowers o' the forest that fought aye the foremost,
The prime o' our land are cauld in the clay."

"The Flowers of the Forest," both the words and the music, have long since become a national possession. Yet it is well for the descendants of the Foresters to remember that the song referred originally to *the Foresters*, their forefathers. The

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

This portrait is from Chantrey's bust at Abbotsford, which according to Lockhart, "alone preserves for posterity the cast of expression most fondly remembered by all who ever mingled in his domestic circle."

beautiful simile would have missed a great deal of its aptness had it not referred to the young men of the Forest. The Foresters were at that time the men of the lower part of Gala Water and the upper part of Tweed, and of Yarrow and Ettrick. The song referred, amongst others, to the men of Galashiels, which at that time, and for another hundred years, was probably the most populous and important Forest Stead, and whose tacksman or tenant was generally Warden of the Ward of Tweed, and one of the most powerful men in the Forest. At the time of Flodden the Forest Steadings are known to have carried large flocks of sheep, and amongst the Foresters were included a large proportion of shepherds. Craig-Brown, writing of the Foresters about the time of Flodden, and with reference to the country in time of peace, and contrasting them with the mosstroopers of Liddesdale, says—"The tacksmen of the Forest and their servants . . . were industrious occupiers of the soil, rearing large herds of cattle and sheep, and not neglecting such crops as would grow on their mountainous holdings." The King alone was said to have 10,000 sheep in the Forest. The music of "The Flowers of the Forest" is in Skene's collection, about 1615, and the old song is, Veitch says, "as old as about the date of the battle of Flodden," and it is

generally accepted as beyond question that the old song referred to the battle. Scott's lines apply to all the Borderers, the men of the Burghs as well as the Foresters, and all alike well earned his magnificent tribute and the Forest's immortal lament. There are only two lines of the old song extant. These are—

**"I've heard them lilting at the ewes milkin'."**

and

**"The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away."**

These refer to the Forest, and to a typical occupation of the Foresters. Jean Elliot in her fine reconstruction of the song has followed the old lines. But "The Flowers o' the Forest," both the music and the song, have long since passed beyond all local limits and become a national possession.

Over thirty years of intermittent but savage and relentless Border warfare followed Flodden. Most of the Forest Steadings were burned, some of them several times, and everything that could be moved was carried off. The English were now employing mercenary troops of a brutal type systematically to devastate the Border, including the Forest. Evers and Latoun reported in 1544 to their brutal paymaster, Henry VIII., that they had burned 192

towns, towers and steads—some of them with women and children in them—and that they had carried off 10,386 cattle, 12,492 sheep, 1296 horses, and 850 bolls of corn, besides other plunder. They received their deserts next year at the Battle of Ancrum. The Scotch army was collected in the hills above Galashiels, and the Foresters were there. They routed the English, and gave no quarter. And never was fate better deserved.

The remainder of the century, up to the Union of the Crowns, was on the Border mainly taken up with attempts to establish peace and order. The Border shared in the disturbances of Queen Mary's reign, but James VI. was solicitous not to endanger the prospect of succeeding to the English Throne, and tried to put an end to Border warfare. The Reformation in 1560 took a long time to make itself felt on the Border, but peace and order of a kind were gradually established.

Galashiels was erected by Sir James Pringle of Galashiels and Smailholm into a Burgh of Barony in 1599, and this marked the commencement of a new era. Probably this was done because the population was now, perhaps of choice, and in any case of necessity, taking to burghal trades and crafts. We know that before this date there were two waulk mills in Galashiels. The erection of the Burgh was confirmed by a Charter under the Great Seal in 1617. It would be as soon as possible after the erection of the Burgh that the Old Market Cross, the shaft of which still

stands, and the Old Tolbooth would be erected. These were the invariable equipment of a Burgh, and evidences of its privileges and powers. The ivy-covered and picturesque ruins of the Old Tolbooth stood near where the Old Town Cross still stands till it was taken down as recently as in 1880, because it projected into what is now Scott Crescent and had become dangerous. The oldest building now standing in Galashiels is understood to be the oldest part of Old Gala House, which up till recently bore the date 1583. The jougs from the Old Tolbooth are now at the entrance to Abbotsford.

Prior to the Reformation the few churches that existed were served by the unreformed monasteries. There had been from a very early date a small chapel at Lindean, connected with the Abbey of Kelso, the remains of which are still to be seen in old Lindean churchyard. After the Reformation it was abandoned. A church was shortly afterwards erected at Boleside, because much the greater part of the increasing population of the new Parish of Lindean and Galashiels was on the north side of the Tweed. The road to the church was by the Barrs Road, straight over the hill and past the entrance to Glenmayne. This church was in use for only a short time when, in 1617, it was abandoned, and a new church, " well built, comely apparalled," was erected at Galashiels. It stood in the Old Church Yard, and adjoined the Gala Aisle, built in 1636, which still stands there. Near it in former days, at the foot of the bank, were the Bow

GALA AISLE.

Door of Aisle erected in 1636. The Coats of Arms are those of the builder, Hugh Scott of Deuchar, third son of "Auld Wat" of Harden and Mary Scott the Flower of Yarrow (on left), and of Jean Pringle, his wife, eldest daughter of Sir James Pringle who granted the first charter to Galashiels (on right).

Butts, where practice of archery was compulsory, especially on Sundays. The Bow Butts are still kept in memory by the Bow Butts footpath. Before 1814 this church had got into a state of delapidation, when the church now known as the Old Parish Church took its place, and the other was pulled down. During the greater part of the two centuries following the Reformation the history of Galashiels is religious and industrial. The Minister and Kirk Session seem to have been the real rulers of the place. There was another set of jougs at the kirk door, and these are now in the Antiquarian Museum, Edinburgh, and there was a " pillar "—as the place of public repentance was called—inside. The minutes of the Kirk Session are instructive and, at this distance of time, sometimes amusing reading. Now, since Galashiels was made a statutory Police Burgh in 1850 great progress in the amenities of life has been made, and the town has in material matters changed beyond recognition, and has that sort of government known as Local Self Government. But in those days the Minister and Kirk Session ruled, and the people of Galashiels were stern Covenanters. Some of them fought at Bothwell Brig, two being among the captives. Some of them had their looms confiscated, and were heavily fined, and some were imprisoned under barbarous conditions. In 1679 Claverhouse surprised a large conventicle at Meigle Pots. George Pringle of Torwoodlee was the most notable Covenanter in the district, and was impoverished by fines.

He was loyal at first, and deeply resented Cromwell's breach of faith, and the execution of Charles I., though he ultimately turned against the Stewart family. He was one of twelve who met at Amsterdam in 1685 and constituted themselves a council "for the recovery of the religion, rights and liberties of the Kingdom of Scotland," which council assisted to bring about the Revolution, which placed William and Mary on the Throne as joint sovereigns in 1688. Craig-Brown says of him that "Selkirkshire does not claim a son more eminent and honourable."

But the troublous times between the Reformation and the Revolution, though making material progress very slow and difficult, did not make it absolutely impossible. Though the Battle of Philiphaugh was fought in 1645, and Cromwell was encamped on Netherdale Haugh in 1650, it is on record that there were three waulk mills in Galashiels in 1656, and in 1666 the first Weavers' Corporation was established, which continued till 1875. Its flag is in the Public Library. It was followed a hundred years later by the Manufacturers' Corporation in 1777, which still exists; and in 1778 by the Dyers' Incorporation, which does not now function. Sir George Douglas in his History of Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles says "the manufactures of Galashiels are traceable to an even much earlier date than those of Hawick, being mentioned in a charter which conveys the Barony to the Crown so far back as 1622." But forty-one years before that date, in 1581, and it is not known how

much earlier, there were two waulk mills in Galashiels. That is getting back to the Reformation and the Battle of Ancrum, and shows the early growth of the woollen industry.

Even in the times of the Romans the Britons could weave some kind of a woollen cloth. As the Forest was cleared and drained, and as the pasture improved, so the flocks of sheep and the production of wool increased. It was the supply of wool that gave rise to the woollen industry. At first its export seems to have been prohibited. In 1225 the Abbot of Melrose required to get special permission to export a cargo to Flanders. Afterwards there seems to have been an export tax, for from 1370 to 1394 the Abbot, to compensate him for losses suffered in war, got exemption from the tax. Both James I. and James II. exported wool from the Forest to Flanders on their own account, and were literally merchant princes. After the Reformation, and all through, and in spite of the Civil War, efforts were made to encourage woollen manufacture, but at that time without much success. There was only one additional waulk mill in Galashiels. But almost every village had its weavers, who worked in their own cottages. At the Union of the Parliaments (1707), to put Scotland on the same footing as England, the export of wool was again prohibited, and in 1727 a Board of Manufactures was set up, with a sum of £14,000 at its disposal, to encourage amongst other things woollen manufacture. The sum seems modest even allowing for the differ-

ence in the value of money. Small grants were given, and some progress was made, but very small quantities of wool were manufactured. George Mercer was in 1775 the largest consumer of wool with 152 stones. From 1780 onwards efforts were made to get improved machinery from Yorkshire, and in 1784 George Mercer got a grant of £40 towards the expense of a visit to the manufacturing towns in England to improve himself, and seek out new and useful machinery. Craig-Brown says that in him " is to be recognised the shrewd, enterprising, and persevering pioneer of our local industry." The fly-shuttle was introduced in 1788, and it, the spinning-jenny, and the revolving cards revolutionised the industry. In 1790 the first woollen mill for machine carding, and the first woollen mill in Scotland in the modern meaning of the term, was erected by the Mercers on the site now occupied by Wilderbank Mill. It was such a great improvement that wool was sent to be carded from as far as Hawick by horses with panniers. This mill was followed in 1792 by Mid Mill, erected by Adam Cochrane, Richard Lees, Robert Gill, and David Grieve, who combined for the purpose because none of them could do it alone. After the co-partnership principle was established other factories followed in quick succession. Craig-Brown says that " Galashiels, closely followed by Selkirk, was the cradle of the Tweed trade; it has always maintained the lead, and is still foremost." From this time onwards the history

Rev. Robert Douglas, D.D., Minister of Galashiels 1770-1820.
(From Portrait by Raeburn).

Inscription on silver cup, one of several presentations to Dr Douglas.

Hail, Reverend Doctor! dearer still,
Now, when thy life is all down hill,
There was a time, not yet far gone,
When you stood forth, and stood alone.
When our frail bark was tempest tossed,
And neared the shallow rocky coast,
You cheered the crew. A favouring gale,
Auspicious, filled the swelling sail,
The vessel stands again to sea,
And rides the waves triumphantly.
Now in the autumn of your days,
Accept this tribute of our praise
To cheer thee in thy latter end,
Our guide, our pastor, and our friend.

of the industry was one of remarkable progress; water power was superseded by steam power, better buildings were erected and better machinery introduced, home wool was very largely superseded by finer colonial and foreign wools, and great advances were made in quantity and cheapness of production, and quality of fabric, and variety and beauty of design. The opening of the railway in 1849 gave a great impetus to trade, and steadily improving means of communication has given access to the markets of the world, some of which are now being closed by tariff walls. If the people of Galashiels played a worthy part in the history of the Forest and of Scotland before Galashiels was made a Burgh, they have since played a leading and no less creditable part in the development of the woollen industry.

The population of Galashiels is said to have been 400 in 1622, but this on the face of it does not profess to be an exact figure, and is probably an under-statement. By 1780, when the woollen manufacture first began to get really under way, the population had increased very little, but fifty years later, in 1831, the Parish minister in the New Statistical Account of the Parish gives the population of the town, as distinguished from the parish, as 2209. It is now probably about 14,000.

There are two names that have not been mentioned, and without the mention of which no sketch of the history of Galashiels could be allowed to close. These names are those of Dr Douglas and Sir Walter Scott.

Dr Douglas was Parish minister of Galashiels from 1770 to 1820, and Sir Walter Scott, who was born in 1771, was a near relative of the Russells of Ashiestiel, which place he frequently visited, till in 1804 he became the tenant and lived there till 1812, when he settled at Abbotsford. Ashiestiel is on the Tweed about five miles from Galashiels, and Abbotsford is only across the river. In 1811 Sir Walter bought from Dr Douglas a small property on the Tweed, then known as Cartley Hole, which was the nucleus of Abbotsford. Dr Douglas was already an old friend of Sir Walter's, whose sterling worth, as Lockhart says, Sir Walter venerated. Dr Douglas and Sir Walter Scott were both influential friends through whom the then struggling manufacturers of Galashiels communicated with the Board of Manufactures in Edinburgh. Dr Douglas has always been credited with having saved the trade by judicious and liberal financial assistance in the crisis that followed on the Napoleonic Wars. He did not lose as things turned out, but he took great risk of losing. He was respected and loved by all as few Parish ministers have ever been. His memory has already outlived more than 100 years of change and is still cherished. Sir Walter Scott was frequently in Galashiels, crossing the river by the old Abbots Ford—from which Abbotsford takes its name—and following the old road, now known as Tweed Road, past the Englishmen's Syke to Church Street and the Old Town. In addition to Dr Douglas, who lived at the

old manse, now The Grange, he was specially intimate with Scott of Gala, who then lived in Old Gala House, and George Craig, who then lived at The Green in the Old Town, and was not only factor for Gala and Baron Bailie, but was also the only local banker, and with whom Sir Walter transacted all his local banking business. Sir Walter was a great builder and improver himself, and always interested in the buildings and improvements of others. He was building Abbotsford at the same time that the Church of Galashiels, many of the original factories, and a considerable part of the town were being built. Part of High Street was built at this time, also Bank Street and Bridge Street, which have this in common that they have houses on one side only with gardens on the other, and more than likely Sir Walter had some influence on this early instance of what we now call town-planning, in which his friends, Scott of Gala, Craig, and Dr Douglas were engaged. In his own building of Abbotsford he employed, amongst others, a Galashiels firm of builders, Sanderson & Paterson, and other Galashiels tradesmen. On a memorable occasion in 1821 the Galashiels Manufacturers' Corporation entertained their great friend and neighbour at their annual Michaelmas meeting, in celebration of his having been made a Baronet, which at that time was an unprecedented honour for a literary man. Like "The Flowers o' the Forest," Sir Walter's name and fame are now national possessions, but it is pleasant and well for the people of Galashiels to remember the

intimate and cordial relations that obtained between Galashiels and its great and world famous neighbour.

There are now in Galashiels very few visible memorials of its past history. The old Hunter's Hall of the Douglas and almost all else have passed away. It is, therefore, the more fitting and necessary that the town should dedicate one special day in each year to inspire its future by commemorating its past, alike the worthy share it took in the struggle for independence and in Border warfare, and the share it has taken in the rise and development of the South of Scotland woollen industry, the one as honourable as the other. The same qualities of character are still required. The woollen industry at present, after the recent world war, is coming through a time comparable in difficulty to the time it came through after the Napoleonic Wars, and the character and grit of the old pioneers of the trade are still needed; and the impressive War Memorial, reared in the centre of the town to those who fell in the recent war, bears witness that the old Border spirit is still ready, as of old, when the country calls.

> "Vain mightiest fleets of iron framed,
> Vain those all-shattering guns,
> Unless proud Scotland keep untamed,
> The strong hearts of her sons."

## DESCRIPTION

OF

# The Galashiels Burgh Flag

THE basis of the Flag is the flag known as the St. Andrew's Cross. This was the old national flag of Scotland before the Union. It is a white diagonal cross on a blue ground. St. Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, and he is said to have been crucified on a cross of this shape. The Scottish St. Andrew's Cross flag is the basis of the Union Jack, which was made by superimposing the St. George's Cross of England and the St. Patrick's Cross of Ireland on the St. Andrew's Cross of Scotland, thus uniting the national flags of all three countries in the Union Jack.

As it was necessary to differentiate the St. Andrew's Cross so as to identify it specially with the particular place in Scotland, that is with Galashiels, which the flag was intended to represent, and with that place alone and no other, it was decided to place upon the flag symbols which taken together were representative of the history of Galashiels and of no other place. The white Cross of St. Andrew divides the blue ground of the flag into four triangular divisions, and to balance the design of the flag it was considered best to have a somewhat similar device in each of the four divisions. The four old Coats of

Arms that were in the fullest way symbolic of the history of Galashiels were therefore chosen. In the division nearest the staff of the flag has been placed the old Royal Coat of Arms of Scotland before the Union, the "ruddy lion ramped in gold," symbolising that from time immemorial the Forest Stead of Galashiels had been part of the Crown property of Scotland, and that the men of Galashiels in the old days had been direct vassals of the King. In the corresponding division farthest from the staff of the flag has been placed the old Coat of Arms of the Douglas Family, three white stars on a blue ground on the upper part of the shield and the heart on a white ground on the lower, as symbolising that from the date when King Robert the Bruce gifted the Forest to the Good Lord James Douglas in 1321 till the Douglas estates were forfeited in 1445 the Forest Stead of Galashiels belonged to the great Border family of the Black Douglas, and that the men of Galashiels were at that time vassals of the Douglas. In the division beneath the Cross has been placed the old Coat of Arms of the Pringles of Galashiels, a blue St. Andrew's Cross on a white ground with five white shells on the Cross and the date 1599, symbolising that the Pringle family held the Forest Stead of Galashiels from 1408 to 1599, and were then the leaders of the men of Galashiels under the Crown and the Douglas respectively, and also because on the latter date, 1599, Sir James Pringle granted the first Charter to the Burgh of Barony of Galashiels.

Flag of Galashiels Weavers' Corporation 1666-1875.
This flag was carried in the Procession that welcomed Sir Walter Scott in 1821. It is now in Galashiels Public Library.

In the division above the Cross has been placed the present Coat of Arms of the Burgh of Galashiels with the date 1337 from which they derive their origin, and the motto "Sour Plums." At the intersection of the Cross has been placed a wreath of thistles and of red and white roses, encircling the date 1503, the date of the marriage of James IV. of Scotland with Margaret Tudor of England, with which the Forest Stead of Galashiels had a special connection in that the Forest formed part of her dowry, and that sasine and possession of the Forest was given to her at Galashiels by delivery there of earth and stone of the Forest in accordance with the old Scotch legal custom. This marriage is specially notable in that it led one hundred years later to the Union of the Crowns. William Dunbar, "The Rhymour of Scotland" of that date, celebrated this marriage by a poem, "The Thistle and the Rose," and these have ever since been regarded as special emblems of this marriage. James IV. is represented in the wreath by the Scotch Thistles, and Margaret Tudor by both White and Red Roses, because she was a descendant both of the House of York, whose emblem was the White Rose, and of the House of Lancaster, whose emblem was the Red Rose.

NOTE:—This flag was presented to the Burgh by Provost Hayward. In the foregoing description the technical language of heraldry has been avoided, to make the description more easily and more generally understood.

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